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## DIVISION OF WORKFORCE SERVICES

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**From:** Charisse Childers, Ph. D., Director

**To:** ADWS Local Offices (LOs), AR CRC Partners (AR Community Colleges, AR Adult Education, Career Pathways), WorkKeys Administrators, and WorkKeys Test Administrators

**Subject:** Arkansas WorkKeys and National Career Readiness Certificate (AR NCRC) Policy and Procedures Change

**Purpose:** To issue Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificate policy and procedural updates to implement WorkKeys Program operations which includes the AR NCRC.

- Background:** Career Readiness Certificates are a product of participating in ACT WorkKeys. The Arkansas Career Readiness Certificate have been made possible through collaboration between the following partner agencies and institutions: Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS), Arkansas Department of Education, Arkansas Community Colleges (ACC), Arkansas Economic Development Commission (AEDC), and Arkansas Department of Higher Education (ADHE).
- General Information:** The primary purpose of the Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificate (AR NCRC) is to positively impact the economy in Arkansas by helping jobseekers build their workplace skills, respond to employer needs, and increase the likelihood of a job seeker's success.

The biggest challenge facing Arkansas employers and economic developers actively recruiting industry to our state continues to be the gap between the current workforce and the job skills needed by employers. To stay competitive in the global market, solutions are necessary to better align workers' skills with high-skill and high-wage jobs. In response to narrowing or eliminating that gap for the employer and the worker, the Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificates, over the past years, and to date, have come to represent a large part of the solution.

The Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificate is a portable credential based on the ACT WorkKeys assessments that document and verify to employers that an individual possesses the basic workplace skills they are seeking. Jobseekers who earn an AR NCRC are automatically registered in ACT's RegiSTAR system. RegiSTAR is a web-based system used for the reporting and management of National Career Readiness Certificates (NCRC).

Regardless of whether a jobseeker has a high school diploma, GED or a post-secondary degree, the AR NCRC further verifies that he or she can handle tasks that are common and vital in today's workplace such as understanding information in common workplace documents, the ability to use mathematical reasoning to solve workplace situations, and to recall, understand, and extract information from graphics such as diagrams, tables, forms, graphs, and charts.

To be issued an AR NCRC, a jobseeker must complete the approved ACT process. The ACT WorkKeys assessments have been purchased by the State and are free of charge to active job seekers, Career Pathways Initiative participants, and employers who are hiring potential new employees. WorkKeys assessments that are purchased by an employer, college, or other institutions and not purchased by the State cannot be used for the issuance of an AR NCRC. Jobseekers taking WorkKeys assessments to earn an AR NCRC should never pay testing sites for the assessments.

To earn an AR NCRC, job seekers are assessed in Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents, through the WorkKeys employability skills assessment system. Based on assessments scores, job seekers earn a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum certificate or if unsuccessful, scores can identify areas in which they need further instruction. Each successful job seeker earns an AR NCRC signed by the Governor and the Director of the Division of Workforce Services.

**The WorkKeys Curriculum** is a pre-WorkKeys instructional tool that helps prepare jobseekers for the WorkKeys assessments. It includes the WorkKeys Curriculum and tools for WorkKeys Essential Skills that may include but not limited to, Problem Solving and Critical Thinking, Work Discipline and Working in Teams. Mastering these skills are the first step toward achieving a certification.

As part of the pre-WorkKeys instruction or pre-test, if the jobseeker does not score at least a Level 4 on the WorkKeys Curriculum Pretest instruction, this indicates a need for skill improvement. The WorkKeys Curriculum Pre-test system can be used to improve their skill level. The system includes targeted, self-paced instruction, pre-assessments, soft skills lessons in occupational job profiles database. These components can help jobseekers learn, practice, and demonstrate the skills needed in the jobs and careers they desire.

Additionally, the WorkKeys Curriculum is designed to improve job seekers basic skills so that they will be ready for employment and successful in job-specific training. The system also includes a Beginning Skills component to develop literacy and prepare job seekers who are below the measured WorkKeys skill levels.

The WorkKeys assessments are a timed comprehensive assessment that measures real world skills that employers believe are critical to job success. The skills measured by WorkKeys are valuable for any occupation that is skilled or professional and at any level of education. The Applied Math, Graphic Literacy, and Workplace Documents Assessment questions are based on situations in the everyday work world. Thousands of employers in Arkansas, nationally and internationally use the WorkKeys assessments and job profiles in their everyday hiring practices.

### **National Career Readiness Certification (NCRC) and RegiSTAR**

An Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificate has always been a portable credential; however, in 2014, all Arkansas certificates, past and present, began being recorded in ACT's national RegiSTAR database. The transfer of Arkansas records to the national RegiSTAR system further validates a jobseeker's certification, regardless of which state they seek employment.

ACT's RegiSTAR management system on a weekly basis automatically sweeps our testing sites for ACT WorkKeys scores and registers certificates in the ACT national database. This system allows administrators to pull and print certificates locally and to create test data reports. Online accounts are automatically created for jobseekers to easily access and share certificate details.

### **SPECIAL NOTE:**

Please note changes to:

- a. Age Eligibility
- b. Incumbent Worker Participation
- c. Referral for Skill Upgrade Determination
- d. Referral and Authorization to Release CRC Scores Form

## CRC POLICY AND PROCEDURES

**AR NCRC Program Eligibility:** The Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificate program is being made available only to active job seekers, Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) and Adult Education participants.

Active Job seekers aged 18 or older, or out-of-school youth may begin the process to an Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificate at their local Workforce Center. An “Active Job Seeker” for AR NCRC purposes, is defined as a person who has obtained the credential to actively pursue employment within 90 days of their program completion.

### Program Eligibility

- Active Job Seekers aged 18 or older; or
- Out-of-school youth aged 16-17 - Not attending any school at time of enrollment
- Arkansas resident (or resident of a neighboring State who works in Arkansas).
- If males, registered for Selective Service (if of applicable age) or exempt.
- Eligible to work in the US, or
- Possesses documents to allow to work in the U.S.

For purposes of identifying an out-of-school youth, these youth are defined as an individual who, at time of the eligibility determination, is not younger than age 16, but less than 18, is not attending or enrolled in school, meets eligibility requirements, and has one of the listed barriers to successfully obtaining appropriate employment.

### **Barriers to Employment:** *(Applies only to out-of-school youth)*

- A school dropout (an individual who is not attending any school and who has not received a secondary school diploma or its equivalent).
- A youth who is within the age of compulsory school attendance, but has not attended school for at least the most recent complete school year calendar quarter session of school, however, the local school defines a quarter.
- An offender.
- A homeless individual
- A runaway (person under 18 years of age who absents himself or herself from home or place of legal residence without permission of his or her family.
- An individual who has attained 16 years of age and left foster care for kinship guardianship.
- An individual who is pregnant or parenting (An individual who is parenting may be a mother or father, custodial or non-custodial. A pregnant individual can be only the expectant mother.

*School is defined as an approved private, public, parochial secondary school, or home school that meets the requirements for legal operation [A.C.A §6-1-201] or a postsecondary school. Adult education, YouthBuild, Job Corps, high school equivalency, and dropout re-engagement programs do not qualify as a “school” for the purposes of WorkKeys.*

Upon enrollment in WorkKeys, please document:

- Age - Acceptable documentation can be a valid driver's license or photo ID card, and
- The barrier(s) used to document barrier(s) to employment. Acceptable documentation for barrier can be self-attestation if no other form of documentation is available.

When serving out-of-school youth to earn the AR NCRC, maintain a file on each out of-school youth containing Name, Age, and Barrier(s) to employment.

Records pertaining to out-of-school youth must be maintained for five (5) years.

**Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) Participants** - All Arkansas Department of Higher Education CPI participants are required to use the WorkKeys Curriculum instruction and WorkKeys assessments to build their workplace skills and improve their employability. These resources have been made to all participants.

All participants must be registered in Arkansas JobLink prior to enrollment.

- A. Arkansas JobLink (AJL):** All job seekers who begin the process to earn an Arkansas NCRC must complete an Arkansas JobLink (AJL) registration. Career Pathways Initiative (CPI) participants who are not yet active job seekers should have their AJL registration flagged in the system by ADWS local office staff and entered as “in progress” with an estimated completion date. Additionally, when the participant completes the CPI program and becomes an active job seeker (ready for employment) the AJL registration should be reviewed and updated by ADWS local office staff. Participants who are entered in AJL prior to seeking employment and have not been flagged as “*in progress*” will create a negative impact on ADWS performance as measured by the U. S. Department of Labor. It is imperative that an AJL registration is completed for everyone who begins the process to achieve an Arkansas NCRC, with attention to detail for those who are not yet actively seeking employment.
- It is the responsibility of the person who administers the WorkKeys Curriculum to ensure that the jobseeker completes an AJL registration. To complete the registration online go to: [www.dws.arkansas.gov](http://www.dws.arkansas.gov). Job seekers also have the option of visiting the nearest Workforce Center to complete the AJL registration in person.
  - The two-year colleges and CPI programs that are designated to proctor the WorkKeys assessments are required to provide the WorkKeys scores to the ADWS local office manager for entering into the AJL system. For security purposes, do not include the entire social security number when submitting the scores electronically or when faxing information on a job seeker. Instead, provide the name and last four digits of the SSN e.g., xxx-xx-1234. Please call the appropriate office to provide full SSNs when requested.
- B. Examinee ID Numbers:** Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificates are issued by the job seeker's ID which is auto generated when an examinee account is created. The jobseeker's Social Security number is not required to take the WorkKeys assessment however, the last 4 of the social security number may be used for an examinee ID during the assessments.

- C. WorkKeys Curriculum must be completed at an approved site for the job seeker to receive a referral form to take the WorkKeys assessments:** The pre-test cannot be completed at home or away from an approved AR NCRC partnership site. Job seekers may work on their lessons at home to build their skill gap and for additional practice work however, the actual administration and supervision of WorkKeys Curriculum by AR NCRC staff is necessary to evaluate the job seeker and determine how to effectively assist the jobseeker to reach their goals. The pre-test is not timed, and job seekers can spend as much time as they desire practicing their lessons. The WorkKeys Curriculum scores and final quizzes are not the same as WorkKeys assessment scores.
- D. Expiring WorkKeys Curriculum Pre-test Scores:** The WorkKeys Curriculum system was purchased by the state of Arkansas as a practice tool to help jobseekers prepare for and successfully complete the ACT WorkKeys assessments. WorkKeys assessments must be completed within 30 days of successfully completing WorkKeys Curriculum Pre-test. If not, the jobseeker will be instructed to return to the referring agency/institution for a refresher course using the WorkKeys Curriculum. WorkKeys Test Administrators should pay close attention to the date on the WorkKeys referral form. If the jobseeker did not arrive at the testing site at the scheduled date on the form, they will be referred back to the site that administered the WorkKeys Curriculum Pre-test. A new referral form must be completed indicating when the jobseeker is rescheduled to take WorkKeys assessment(s).
- E. WorkKeys Assessment Sites:** To earn an Arkansas NCRC, WorkKeys assessments must be taken at approved sites by authorized staff.
- Adult Education Centers authorized by the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services to administer the WorkKeys assessments may not proctor WorkKeys to students who are still enrolled in high school.
  - Job seekers must possess a state referral form completed by ADWS local office to take WorkKeys Curriculum and/or WorkKeys assessments. ADWS will not pay for assessments proctored to job seekers who do not have the approved State referral form on the scheduled day of testing. The approved State referral form is the job seekers “ticket” into the testing room along with a picture ID. The referral form must not be altered by anyone other than ADWS authorized staff. Job seekers are not allowed to take the WorkKeys Curriculum or WorkKeys assessments at a high school campus.
  - Job seekers are allowed 55 minutes on each of the WorkKeys assessments. The three assessments do not have to be taken on the same day.
- F. WorkKeys Scoring:** The AR NCRC program uses results from the Applied Math, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents to award certificates in five skill levels:
- PLATINUM+: Scores a Level 7 or higher across the three (3) skill levels
  - PLATINUM: Scores a Level 6 or higher on all three (3) skill levels
  - GOLD: Scores a Level 5 or higher on all three (3) skill levels
  - SILVER: Scores a Level 4 or higher on all three (3) skill levels
  - BRONZE: Scores at a minimum Level 3 on all three (3) skill levels

**NOTE:** You will not find certificate Levels (*Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze*) in the ACT Validus WorkKeys score reports. The assessments are scored <3, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

- <3 = Unsuccessful (less than 3)
- 3 = Bronze
- 4 = Silver
- 5 = Gold
- 6 = Platinum
- 7 = Platinum +

If the job seeker scores a 3 or above on the WorkKeys assessments in all three areas (*Workplace Documents, Applied Math, and Graphic Literacy*) an Arkansas National Career Readiness Certificate will be issued based upon the **lowest** skill score.

Example:

Job Seeker A: Workplace Documents score: 6  
Applied Math score: 5  
Graphic Literacy score: 4  
**Eligible for Silver AR NCRC**

Example

Job Seeker B: Workplace Documents score: 5  
Applied Math score: 7  
Graphic Literacy score: 3  
**Eligible for Bronze AR NCRC**

Job Seeker C: Workplace Documents score: 7  
Applied Math score: 7  
Graphic Literacy score: 6  
**Eligible for Platinum AR NCRC**

Job Seeker D: Workplace Documents: 6  
Applied Math score: 7  
Graphic Literacy score: 5  
**Eligible for Gold AR NCRC**

Job Seeker E: Workplace Documents score: 5  
Applied Math score: 6  
Graphic Literacy score: <3  
**Not Eligible for AR NCRC\*\***

- ❖ Job Seeker E should be referred for developmental skill building in Graphic Literacy utilizing the WorkKeys Curriculum. The jobseeker must provide documentation of having successfully improved their skill level before receiving a new referral form to retake the Graphic Literacy WorkKeys assessment.

**G. WorkKeys Retakes:** Earning an AR NCRC is based on the jobseeker's ability to successfully complete the WorkKeys Curriculum and Assessments. The score of each assessment area

determines if the jobseeker has earned the AR NCRC or the need for some level of skill upgrade.

Skill upgrades based on unsuccessful WorkKeys Assessment scores can be completed by referral to Adult Education or in the case of an employer driven need, referral back to the Curriculum site, using the AR NCRC Referral Form. If unsuccessful on the WorkKeys Assessments exam, the jobseeker will be referred to a source for skill upgrading. The determination of how the skill upgrade will be provided is determined by one of two (2) factors:

1. Is the Jobseeker requesting the AR NCRC due to an immediate need to meet an employer job announcement? “*Immediate Need*” for skill upgrade purpose is defined as job posting closes within the next seven (7) days. OR
2. Is the Jobseeker requesting the AR NCRC to enhance their marketability in the job market?

If the Jobseeker meets criteria 1 – The skill deficiency is minimal, failing no more than 1 Assessment, and can be tutored to pass the assessment in three (3) days or less, the testing site will refer the jobseeker back to the original Curriculum site for skill upgrade instruction. At the time of the referral to the Curriculum site the Curriculum Instructor must provide a WorkKeys Curriculum review and pre-test. The jobseeker must successfully complete at a Level 5 or above. Once complete the jobseeker will be referred to retest on the assessments following the approved referral process.

If the Jobseeker meets criteria 2 – Continue to follow normal procedures to refer the jobseeker for skill upgrade through Adult Education, or other approved partner facility for development courses to assist in preparing the jobseeker to successfully complete unsuccessful assessment scores. At this time the jobseeker should be informed that enrollment in a skill development course(s) at Adult Education, they will be enrolled in a course of skill development based on Adult Education’s assessment. Once the jobseeker has successfully completed skill development course (s) sufficiently to retest, the facility will provide a new referral form indicating which assessment(s) the jobseeker can retake.

Although, the State would like to allow as many jobseekers as possible to have an opportunity to obtain an AR NCRC, it’s not fiducially possible. If a jobseeker successfully completes the AR NCRC process and earns a bronze certificate but would like to upgrade their certificate to a higher level, such as a silver, gold, or platinum, without an approved reason, this request cannot be honored.

Jobseekers who have taken WorkKeys assessments are allowed the opportunity to retake WorkKeys under the following three conditions:

- 1) Unsuccessful first attempt: If the jobseeker did not achieve a WorkKeys score high enough to be issued an AR NCRC, but they have done some skill upgrade work either through Adult Education, ADWS local office or Arkansas Workforce Center staff using the WorkKeys Curriculum, the retake is approved. However, the jobseeker must provide documentation of having successfully improved their skill level on the part of the assessment(s) that they were



unsuccessful during the first attempt and should be given a new referral form indicating which assessment(s) they are allowed to retake. **The maximum attempts allowed for WorkKeys are two (2) (original plus one additional attempt) before the jobseeker is automatically referred to Adult Education.** If the jobseeker does not want to go to Adult Education for developmental courses, another tool should be introduced to them, if they opt to forego the alternate tool, they are no longer eligible to retake WorkKeys.

To clarify the bolded statement above, the total attempts that are allowed, at no cost to the customer in total are three (3). There are 2 attempts before sending to Adult Education or other approved partner facility for developmental courses to assist in preparing the customer to successfully complete unsuccessful assessment scores. When the customer has completed the skill upgrade sufficiently to retest, the facility will provide a new referral form indicating which assessment(s) they can retake. This will be the third and final attempt supported through ADWS.

- 2) An incumbent worker may participate in the AR NCRC program if the jobseeker is seeking a higher paying position within the company employed or a company other than of which the jobseeker is employed; if the new company requires applicants to have a specific level AR NCRC.
- 3) Job seeker applying for ACT job profiled position: The authorized retake of an AR NCRC holder who did not achieve a WorkKeys score high enough to be issued an AR NCRC at the level required to satisfy the employer's ACT job profiled position requirement is allowable. Before the jobseeker is allowed to retest, skill upgrade work must be completed through Adult Education, ADWS local office or Arkansas Workforce Center using the WorkKeys Curriculum. The job seeker should be given a new referral form indicating which assessment(s) they are allowed to retake. **The maximum attempts allowed for WorkKeys are two (2) before the job seeker is automatically referred to Adult Education.** This applies to the AR NCRC holder or a first-time job seeker taking the WorkKeys Assessment. If the jobseeker does not want to go to Adult Education for developmental courses, another tool should be introduced to them and if they opt to forego the alternate tool, they are no longer eligible to retake WorkKeys free of charge and must pay for additional testing at an ACT WorkKeys testing center that accepts WorkKeys fees for testing. Also see Section "P" for additional directions.

**H. Unapproved WorkKeys Retakes:** The AR NCRC is a statewide program, therefore, when WorkKeys sites allow even one or two jobseekers to repeatedly assess multiple times without following procedures, the number of wasted assessments quickly add up. WorkKeys Test Administrators should **never** allow jobseekers to repeat an assessment(s) on the same day. The assessments (Applied Math, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents) are purchased by the State and are free of charge to the jobseeker and to the employer for hiring potential new employees. Please note that **unapproved** retake scores will not be used to award a certificate.

- 1) Attempt to upgrade certificate level: AR NCRC holders are not allowed to retake assessments to upgrade their previous score simply to achieve a higher certificate level. Approval for jobseekers requesting a retake of an assessment simply to improve the certificate level is not the design of the program. However, jobseekers

are allowed to retest when the request is employer driven and the job has been profiled requiring a higher level of certification. (See: WorkKeys Retakes)

- 2) ACT Job Profile not completed: In the event that an employer requires a specific level AR NCRC for employment, the employer must have completed an ACT job profile completed for the specific position(s). An employer can only prefer that a job seeker have an AR NCRC if the job has not been profiled. For example, an employer may not request all applicants have a Silver AR NCRC, if the position listed with ADWS has not been ACT profiled.
- 3) Developmental skill building courses: The job seeker did not go back to Adult Education, ADWS local office or Arkansas Workforce Center when referred to further develop their skill gap regarding unsuccessful WorkKeys assessment(s) and if another tool was introduced to the job seeker to improve the skill level(s) but was rejected, the jobseeker is not eligible to retake WorkKeys unless the course work is completed.

**I. Certificates: ACT through its RegiSTAR system** will issue certificates based on the scores in the ACT WorkKeys database. The jobseeker must score a Level 3 or above on the Applied Math, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents assessments to receive an AR NCRC. ACT through its Validus report system shares certificates with the testing site that proctored the WorkKeys assessments. Once received by the institution, the certificate will be printed and distributed to the successful job seeker. Certificates should be stored in a secure location and should not be mailed; however, at the onset of the exam the WorkKeys Test Administrator should inform the examinee if they are successful taking the WorkKeys assessments, they must revisit the site where they took the WorkKeys Exam after 7 working days of successful completion of the WorkKeys assessments and provide identification to receive their certificate. The WorkKeys Test Administrators should also inform the jobseeker that AR NCRCs has no expiration date.

**SPECIAL NOTE:** Examinees will also receive a copy of their AR NCRC at the email address submitted at time of registering in Validus, upon request to ACT. The official AR NCRC will be held at the test location for the examinee to pick up beginning seven (7) working days after successful completion of the WorkKeys assessments.

**J. Certificate Reprints:** Job seekers/participants should be informed by the WorkKeys Test Administrator to safeguard their certificate once received. In lieu of a certificate reprint, WorkKeys Test Administrators are allowed to print WorkKeys scores from the ACT Validus system at no additional cost to the jobseeker. Certificate holders can contact ACT directly at 1-800-WORKKEY, select Option 2, to order a printed AR National Career Readiness Certificate at no cost to them.

**K. Share Your ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC):** Certificate holders can share their nationally portable credential. WorkKeys assessment scores are registered into the ACT National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) database. Scores are usually available in the NCRC database 24 hours after successfully completing the Applied Math, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents assessments. This database will allow NCRC holders to

view their certificate level and to share their NCRC information with employers or whomever they give authorization to view.

- ❖ To protect the jobseeker's privacy, ACT will not release any information until the NCRC holder authorizes it. For employers/others to verify the NCRC details, the jobseeker must first share their certificate by accessing the following website:  
<http://www.act.org/certificate/login.html>
- ❖ After the jobseeker shares their certificate, the credential may be verified at:  
<http://www.act.org/certificate/verify.html>

**L. Unapproved Forms:** The Arkansas Division of Workforce Services' AR NCRC Administrative office policy is to provide uniform and consistent CRC materials across the state. Never, under any circumstances should any form be used for program operations that have not been approved by the ADWS AR NCRC Administrative Office. Only the approved Arkansas NCRC forms can be accepted. All locally developed CRC forms must be submitted for approval to the ADWS AR NCRC Administrative office before implementing in WorkKeys program operations.

**M. Required Updates:** It is imperative that WorkKeys Curriculum instructors and WorkKeys Test Administrators/Proctors provide the AR NCRC Administrative office with updated contact information. The information will help the office maintain a up to date distribution list to provide information in a timely manner to all applicable AR NCRC partners across the state. Those included on the distribution list will receive correspondence including updates, revised forms, ACT national conference announcements, meeting, and training information.

When updating the WorkKeys CRC staff, contact information updates must include the staff's name, phone number, fax number, email address, physical address and WorkKeys role in WorkKeys. All updates must be in writing (email) by the Primary Contact person for Curriculum or Test Administration. Service providers must also clarify if the update replaces someone or is an additional member. If a staff person is no longer working with AR WorkKeys, please let our office know so that we can remove them from the distribution list and update ACT as well. Also, please be reminded that local sites cannot add or delete Primary WorkKeys staff. The information must be reported to DWS AR NCRC Administrative office to make the updates. Local providers may update secondary staff and inform the DWS AR NCRC Administrative office the change simultaneously.

**N. Training:** It is mandatory that all AR NCRC staff complete the "Introduction to WorkKeys Curriculum" and "ACT WorkKeys Curriculum Pre-test Training" webinars before administering the WorkKeys Curriculum instruction. WorkKeys administrators and proctors must complete the "ACT WorkKeys Test Administration Training for Online Testing" webinar, and the "WorkKeys Internet Version Online User's Guide" before providing WorkKeys curriculum instruction and proctoring assessments.

The ACT WorkKeys Curriculum Administration User Guide is available from the ACT website at:

<http://www.act.org/content/dam/act/unsecured/documents/WorkKeysCurriculumAdmin-UserGuide.pdf>. In-app help is available from within ACT WorkKeys Curriculum by selecting the Support Icon in the bottom left of the screen. If you have questions or would like help getting started, please contact ACT Customer Service toll free at 877-842-6205 or by email at [workkeyscurriculum@act.org](mailto:workkeyscurriculum@act.org).

AR NCRC staff should also utilize the online practice modules available for both WorkKeys Curriculum and WorkKeys. Staff should **never** practice using “live” WorkKeys assessments. ACT will invoice ADWS for all Workplace Documents, Applied Math and Graphic Literacy assessments launched.

To register for upcoming complimentary WorkKeys Curriculum/WorkKeys Curriculum Pre-test webinars, go to the following link: [www.WorkKeysCurriculumPre-test.com/training](http://www.WorkKeysCurriculumPre-test.com/training).

**IMPORTANT NOTIFICATION:** WorkKeys Administrators and Proctors are required to notify the AR NCRC Administrative Office after completing mandatory training. Please use the form attached to notify the CRC Administrative Office of new or deleted Administrators; also use the form in the User Guide to notify ACT when training is complete.

You must notify the AR NCRC Administrative office in writing or through email to remove WorkKeys Primary Curriculum and Test Administrators. The local site cannot add or delete Primary WorkKeys staff. However, the local WorkKeys site’s Primary Curriculum and Test Administrators can add or delete other local staff with same or similar roles but must notify the CRC Administrative Office of these changes in writing or via email.

**Employers Requesting to Pay for WorkKeys Assessments:** Companies interested in WorkKeys assessments for internal promotions for their employees and/or interested in purchasing additional WorkKeys assessments other than Applied Math, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents must contact ACT WorkKeys directly at 1-800-WORKKEY for price information. ACT will invoice the employer not ADWS and payments will be made directly to ACT.

- ❖ WorkKeys assessments purchased by a company and/or institution for purposes other than those related to the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet Initiative will not receive a certificate from the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services.

**O. WorkKeys Pricing:** ACT bills the Arkansas Division of Workforce Services directly for each Applied Math, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents assessment launched under the “CRC-Billing to ADWS” financial profile in the Validus system.

**P. Financial Profile:** A Financial Profile must be selected for each assessment added to a WorkKeys registration in the ACT Validus system. Selecting the Financial Profile tells ACT what price to charge for each assessment. If the financial profile is not set, the price charged to your site will be the **highest standard price**. Please pay close attention to set the Financial Profile before the assessment is authorized and launched.

Arkansas Division of Workforce Services (ADWS) and ACT appreciate your participation as an authorized site, proctoring WorkKeys assessments as part of the Arkansas CRC program. ACT has entered into a contract with ADWS confirming the Agency’s commitment to pay for

Applied Math, Graphic Literacy and Workplace Documents for jobseekers who qualify for the program.

It should be noted that “Qualifying” jobseekers for the AR NCRC are job seekers 18 years old or older, who have been registered into the ADWS Local Office Arkansas JobLink system. Others qualifying for the WorkKeys assessments for which charges can be direct-billed to ADWS include ADHE Career Pathways Initiative participants.

- ❖ WorkKeys assessments proctored outside of the AR NCRC program guidelines will be directly billed to your licensed site, at the prevailing rate per ACT prices.

As a registration is created for the job seeker or CPI participant in the ACT Validus system, the WorkKeys site administrator/proctor will be required to choose the appropriate funding source (financial profile) for the assessments they are using for billing and tracking purposes.

Please take caution when selecting one of the following appropriate billing options/financial profiles:

- 1) **AR NCRC - Billing to ADWS: (Job seekers and CPI participants)** Choose this option if you are proctoring the Workplace Documents, Applied Math, and Graphic Literacy assessments under the AR NCRC program guidelines above. ACT will invoice ADWS directly for payment.
- 2) **Education/Government Rate – Billing to Your Licensed Site:** – Choose this option if you are proctoring WorkKeys assessments for jobseekers and/or employers that are paying your site for assessments that would not qualify for ADWS funding. An example of this service would be for existing employees/incumbent workers of an employer enrolled in a program to upgrade their work skill levels. Another example of this service is when an employer has requested assessments other than Workplace Documents, Applied Math, Graphic Literacy or other allowable essential skill assessments. All ACT WorkKeys assessments delivered “**outside**” of the standard Arkansas ACT WorkKeys contract will not be honored for payment. Invoices containing those fees will be sent directly to your site for direct payment to ACT and your site will be responsible for any service charges for jobseeker or company services.
- 3) **Business (Retail) Rate – Billing to Your Licensed Site:**  
Choose this option if an employer wants to pay for WorkKeys assessments and assessing outside of your institution’s sponsored training program and NOT utilize your services or the state services. Contact ACT at 1-800-WORKKEY for more information about this type of assessing. Invoices will be sent directly to your site for your direct payment to ACT and your own cost recovery from a client.

**Q. ACT Job Profile:**

The Job Profile process begins with a tour of the facility with observations of the individual workers performing the job to be profiled. Three important components to WorkKeys Job Profiling are: Job Analysis, Assessment and Training.

- **Job Analysis:** A facilitated focus group session with the Subject Matter Experts (a representative sample of gender, races/ethnicities and experience levels identified by the company) that provide specific information related to skills and skill levels for a position. A task list is created based on job observations, O-Net and ACT. Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are brought in to answer questions regarding the job being profiled. SMEs provide detailed information about the job and rate tasks as they relate to the work. The job analysis process can take anywhere from 6 to 8 hours or longer.
- **Assessment:** Provides reliable information about a jobseeker's skills and how they compare to the skill levels required for the job.
- **Training:** Shows how the jobseeker performed relative to the "bar" or what is required for the job.

### **Job Profiles vs. Occupational Profiles:**

**Job Profiles** are employer/job specific and offer a detailed task list that describes what, how, when, where and/or why a task is performed in relation to a specific job. They also provide a customized report that documents the tasks and skill levels required for the job along with real world examples. Job Profiles provide qualitative reasons behind the skill levels provided by the job incumbents along with recommendations that are most critical to the job. Job Profiles are EEOC validated.

**Occupational Profiles** are created by averaging job profiles that have been completed by Job Profilers for similar jobs. They are not EEOC validated. Occupational Profiles can serve as a guide to set instructional standards or develop curriculum designed to help jobseekers or students meet skill requirements. An Occupational Profile provides skill levels required for an occupation across jobs, companies, or industries where SMEs may come from different organizations and/or from related jobs within an occupation. Occupational Profiles are not job specific and provide only an idea of where a particular applicant's skill level should be. An employer cannot require a given level of Career Readiness Certification using the occupational profiles, but an employer can recognize the job seekers who have an AR NCRC that most closely matches what the occupational profiles identifies as needed levels. The Job Profile will provide skill level data specific to a job.

### **When to use Job Profiling?**

- High stake hiring, promotional and training decisions that are EEOC compliant
- To describe and document detailed activities of the job
- Identify tasks that are most critical to job performance
- Employer requiring the Arkansas NCRC

### **When to use Occupational Profiling? (Not validated)**

- To help jobseekers develop a plan when choosing a career
- Establish skill standards for professional organization for an occupation
- Provide skill levels required on occupation across jobs, companies, or industries where they may not have enough SMEs.

- R. Employers interested in having their job(s) profiled:** Employers must pay to have their job(s) profiled in Arkansas. The ACT WorkKeys job profiling fee varies and the process to conduct a job profile can take from 3 days to 2 weeks. The employer involved must be able to release the appropriate employees (SMEs) for a complete analysis of their job. Employers interested in having their job(s) profiled should contact the AR NCRC Administrative Office.
- S. TABE and Additional Testing:** The CRC program is employer driven. This equates to responding to urgent requests from employers needing a pool of skilled workers within specific time frames without additional testing. Therefore, job seekers will not be required to complete additional testing during the AR NCRC process. Adult Education will be responsible for contacting job seekers who need additional assistance to recommend that they complete additional testing.
- T. WorkKeys Curriculum Technical Support:** Contact the ACT WorkKeys Curriculum Technical Support/Customer Service team at (877) 842-6205 to troubleshoot and assist with curriculum system products. Contact the ACT WorkKeys 800-967-5539, for WorkKeys Curriculum support number for WorkKeys Test. The ACT team is available 24/7/365. The AR NCRC Administrative Office staff is also available for technical support and can be reached toll free at (866) 757-2999 or by email at [crc@arkansas.gov](mailto:crc@arkansas.gov).
- U. Temporary Employment Agencies:** Some companies hire almost exclusively through temp agencies. ADWS senior management will evaluate proposals from temp agencies on a case-by-case basis. ADWS prefers to work directly with employers and not through a third-party intermediary since temporary agencies are paid by employers to help recruit new employees and the possibility of legal ramifications exist regarding hiring decisions and terminations. If ADWS decides to work with a temporary agency, a detailed and confidential contract between the two parties will be executed.

**Inquiries:** Please submit any questions to [crc@arkansas.gov](mailto:crc@arkansas.gov)

**Attachments:** AR NCRC Referral Form, Training Verification Form, AR NCRC Local Site Print Procedures and AR NCRC Steps Flow Chart

**Effective Date:** Immediate

**Expiration Date:** Continuing